 **Landcare Broken Hill Inc**

***Greening the Hill Mk.2***

ABC Radio interview No.22 – 24 September 2019

**PROJECTS ADVANCING – GRANT APPLICATIONS ON THE WAY**

Throughout Landcare Broken Hill’s ***Greening the Hill Mk2*** Initiative I have been speaking about how the projects interlock – they represent a holistic approach to better manage our environment. I’ve described how:

1. Project 2, being the community native plant propagation nursery, from which we hope that one day we’ll grow 100,000s of seedling native plants for planting out in in the reserves and parks within the City;
2. Project 5, being the Green Schools Project, whereby Landcare will partner with all the City’s schools to carry out various greening projects within and around the schools;
3. Project 6, being the Street Tree planting campaign – to encourage people to proactively replant their naturestrips – so that we can get more City tree cover;
4. Project 7, being that project focussed on rejuvenating some of our City’s recreational parks, such as the parks used for sport;
5. Project 9, being the project aimed at re-greening community places – which we kicked off with the landscaping of the 3rd Broken Hill Sea Scouts’ grounds;

**Proposal for North Broken Hill @ Jubilee Oval**

**Landcare Broken Hill is applying to the NSW Government for a grant under the Stronger Country Communities Fund. An exciting new proposal for Broken Hill, linking a number of our *Greening the Hill Mk2 projects*.**

Within the boundaries of Jubilee Oval , at the northern end of the reserve adjoining Boron Street, there is an area of about 3,200 sq.m of land in its original state.

Landcare Broken Hill wants to make this site our **Northern Hub**, at which will bring together a number of our projects. This would be an entirely new community facility for Broken Hill.

First, our **Northern Hub** would be the Landcare Community Garden for North Broken Hill. Following the growing success of the community garden being established at the rear of Centre for Community, which is really our Central Hub, it became very apparent that this is a city of different precincts and communities. So we needed to identify a site in the North. The best community gardens are those easily accessed, especially by foot. Also with easy parking nearby. In this regard the Jubilee Oval site is perfect. Landcare Broken Hill is grateful that the Trustees of the Jubilee Oval Reservation approached us with the offer to consider their unused natural area of land.

Secondly, we need to move as quickly as we can to set up the Community Propagation Nursery. Listeners will recall that I’ve spoken of a community nursery run to professional standards at which we would grow tens of thousands of native plants a year. We would hope to match Melbourne’s City of Bayside Community Nursery that produces in excess of 100,000 plants a year for planting across the Bayside municipality. We know from our very successful launch of the Backyard Bush Nurseries Project on 31 August that there are hundreds of people in Broken Hill who are willing to roll up their sleeves and volunteer to help as nursery growers.

Thirdly, we would use this Northern Hub as a ‘feeder’ for our Green Schools Project. The site is just a couple of blocks from North Broken Hill Primary School on McCulloch Street and the School of the Air on Lane Street and it is only about four blocks away from Willyama High School on Murton Street. Our Green Schools Project has within its concept involving school kids across Broken Hill to be inspired to grow plants and understand the need to better care for our natural environment. We envisage the school kids will be able to come to the Northern Landcare Hub and actually get involved in the growing, both in the community garden and in the propagation nursery. This will be a place of learning and, hopefully, a career-stimulating experience for many kids. It might lead them into careers in agriculture, horticulture, botany, arboriculture, ecology and environmental management.

Fourthly, with a propagation nursery of the scale we envisage to be sited at the Northern Landcare Hub, we’ll be able to sustain the nature-strip tree planting projects, parks and reserves rejuvenation projects, the community places landscaping projects and the Regen Belt project by producing a continuous stream of plants for planting out.

**The Northern Landcare Hub will need some key infrastructure to be built.**

First, for the Northern Community nursery component we will need to establish dozens of garden beds with dripper watering systems installed. We will most probably follow the St Kilda Veg Out Community Garden precedent of having the majority of garden beds allocated to families or community groups. Some beds would be reserved for instruction or demonstration purposes associated with the Green Schools Project component.

Given our ferocious summer weather, the infrastructure will require green houses and shade houses to provide the necessary protection.

As the most successful community gardens around Australia have become real centres of community fellowship and interaction, it is envisaged that there be erected a central open-air meeting place in the form of a very large garden gazebo. This gazebo will perform multiple functions: (a) it will be the place where the volunteers will rest for a cuppa or a cool drink between their garden labours; (b) it will be the classroom-in-the-round where the school kids will gather to receive instructional guidance; (c) it could be a place where small functions and community meetings could be held in the midst of the delightful community garden setting; and (d) because the gazebo will be designed to sit upon a raised podium, it will double as a storage area where garden equipment and materials are kept under the gazebo floor.

It is intended to acquire at least a dozen park benches and seats, all made out of recycled material, which will be placed around the Community Garden for people to sit and rest and observe. One of the most delightful aspects of community gardens I’ve inspected around the country, is that even if active gardening is beyond some nevertheless they come and sit amongst the gardening activity and observe. The elderly and infirm, just love such places.

For the Propagation Nursery, we will need a significant number of propagation green houses, equipped with growing benches and dripper watering systems. Materials will include the soil, compost and growing mediums which overtime we’ll produce on site.

The Northern Landcare Hub will encourage people and businesses, like hotels and restaurants, to bring their food waste so that we can maintain community scale worm farms and composting areas. This will reduce waste going to landfill and generate a valuable commodity for the Community Garden Component & the Propagation Nursery.

We hope that Essential Water will support us with a special arrangement for the water supply. We also intend the Northern Landcare Hub to be self-sufficient with our power needs, by installing a wind and solar power generator with battery storage. That will be a project cost which we believe is necessary as an exemplar for others to follow.

We intend the Northern Landcare Hub, being proposed for the Jubilee Oval northern land, to become a wonderful community facility for Broken Hill and a demonstration model of what come be done when a community works together. Linked to the Green Schools Project, hopefully many kids’ career paths will commence by being inspired here.

**The next public meeting of *GREENING THE HILL MK.2* will be THIS WEEK at Centre for Community, 200 Beryl Street, Thursday 26 September 7.00pm**

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